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of OUR LADY OF AFRICA

Volume 9

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**THE CONGREGATION OF THE
MISSIONARY SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF AFRICA
(White Sisters)**

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa was founded in 1869 by Cardinal Lavigerie to aid the White Fathers in Christianizing the Mohammedan and pagan women of Africa and through their means conquer the family and society. The Sisters cooperate with the White Fathers in all kinds of catechetical, medical and educational works in 143 missions scattered over the vast African Continent.

Though there are 1600 White Sisters, the number is far from being sufficient to cope with the present day needs of our missions. Sisters are needed to staff more catechetical classes, grammar, high and normal schools, as well as more hospitals, dispensaries, baby welfare centers, leprosariums, etc.

Doctors, nurses, teachers, as well as young girls without any special training, who feel called to devote their lives to foreign missionary work, would find ample scope for their zeal among the Africans.

The White Sisters receive their religious training and pronounce their vows in this country before leaving for the missions.

Any young girl who would like to become a White Sister, and thus attain her personal sanctification through active work for the evangelization of Africa, may apply to

*Mother Superior
White Sisters' Training Center
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The Popes and The Missions

Pius XI in "Rerum Ecclesiae" says:



All Christian people should aid, through their generosity the work of the Propagation of the Faith, which, of all the mission organizations, is the principal one.

With due regard for the glory of the pious woman (Pauline Jaricot) who was the Foundress of it, and of the city of Lyons, We have transferred to Rome the Propagation

of the Faith; We have reorganized it, and upon it We have conferred, in a certain way, Roman Citizenship, and given it charge of all the mission needs that exist at present — or that shall exist in the future.

How many and great these necessities and

how poor for the most part, the missionaries are was made clearly evident by the Vatican missionary exhibit, although perhaps, many who saw that exhibit, dazzled by the abundance, the novelty and attractiveness of the exhibit, did not sufficiently realize this.

Be not ashamed therefore, Venerable Brothers, to make yourselves beggars for Christ and for the salvation of souls — and by your pen and the eloquence which flows from your heart, insist that your people, by their interest and generosity, multiply and render more abundant, the harvest that the work of the Propagation of the Faith is gathering in every year.

Since, therefore, none are to be considered so poor and naked, none so infirm or hungry or thirsty, as those who are deprived of the knowledge and grace of God, there is no one who does not see that mercy and a divine reward shall not be wanting to him who has shown mercy to the most needy of his fellows.

A Child of Our Lady of Africa

WHILE WE WERE on our way to visit a sick woman, we met a negress, who with great pride, brought us to her neatly kept home. The first thing that struck our attention was a picture of Our Lady of Africa, hanging on the wall.

"Do you know Our Lady of Africa?" I inquired.

"Oh yes," she quickly replied.

"Where did you come to know about her?"

"In Algiers. Ah! The African Lady is my Mother. I often say to her, 'You are black* like myself, but you are beautiful. I love you; I am your child.'"

"But how did you come to love her so much?"

"When I was working in Algiers, I had a very sore arm. For more than two years it ached so much I could hardly do my work. Yet I had to earn my living. I went to the TEBIB (Arabian doctor); but far from curing it, he made it worse. I knew some Mohammedan women who often went to seek intercession from LALLA MERIEM (Lady Mary), and they obtained many favors from her. I thought, perhaps if I go, she will cure me too. I went with them and

* The statue of Our Lady of Africa is bronze.

asked LALLA MERIEM to cure me. My arm recovered. Look! I can move it and work as if it had never been sore."

"What did you do then?"

"I went back to bring some candles to the African Lady's house; and ever since, I ask favors of her."

"Where did you get her picture?"

"When I left the lady I was working for to marry, she asked me what I would like to have for a present. I told her nothing would give me more pleasure than a picture like hers of the African Lady. She was quite surprised, but I received my request. Now when I am sad or have worries I look at LALLA MERIEM'S picture and tell her about it. Then I feel better."

Moved by the touching faith of this poor woman in Our Heavenly Mother, and thinking it would please her, we offered to clean and frame the picture which had become blackened by smoke. But Fatouma dared not give it to us for fear of displeasing her husband, who returning in the evening from work, would miss the Madonna.

Some time later we were passing before Fatouma's home and stopped to see her.

(Please turn to page 12)

Mary Harkens to the Prayers of Her Child

THAT A MOTHER such as Mary, should hear the pleas of her children seems quite natural for our Negroes; therefore they throw a veil over her benefits, keeping the secret of their familiar intercourse with their heavenly mother. Their filial confidence, however, enables us to detect the attitude of Mary toward them.

Can an earthly mother resist the pleadings of her little children? Children! such the Africans are and they remain, even when the weight of years has whitened their wooly heads. Is it not then, their child-like simplicity that is the cause of the powerful influence they exert over the maternal heart of Mary? At all events it is their ingenuousness that allows us to lift a corner of the veil.

Before daybreak, an aged Negro would furtively leave his hut.

"Where are you going, Charles, at this early hour?"

"I am going to greet the Mother of Jesus and my Mother," he would reply, pointing to the mission church. His fervor did not allow his waiting until sunrise.

As artlessly as a little boy of four, the old man would tell his many trials and troubles to his beloved Mother.

"Charles, when you speak to Mary, does she answer?"

"She tells me, 'Be patient; wait a little; all will be well.'"

One night, Charles did not return to his hut. Jesus seemed to say to him, as of old He said to the Apostles: "Can you not watch one hour with me?" and he remained with his God.

Then towards morning, did Jesus say: "Sleep now and take thy rest?" At any rate, not wishing to sleep at the foot of the Tabernacle, Charles left church; and lying on the ground near the door, he fell asleep.

His rest was of short duration, for the ringing of the ANGELUS roused the old man from his slumber; and he returned to his watch.

After Mass, Charles was again before the image of the Blessed Virgin and he prayed: "Mother, I have come to see you; I am hungry. Since yesterday morning I have had nothing to eat and a mother nourishes her

children. I have come to you because I know you can appease my hunger. Are you not the Mother of all men? Have you not enough food to supply all mankind?" Then, after contemplating our Lady a few minutes, Charles withdrew.

"What did Mary answer, Charles?"

"She said, 'Be patient, you shall receive food. I will tell the people of your village to give you to eat.'"

Assured, without the least shadow of a doubt, Mary's client returned to his hut; and, through her solicitous care, he never more went hungry.

Oh, how Charles understood the words of his Lord: "Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they labor not, neither do they spin . . ."

Another morning, in rags and tatters before the statue of Mary, Charles asked: "Mother, does it honor you that I come to visit you in rags? If you do not give me clothing I will steal some."

"Do not get angry," replied Our Lady; "you will have some clothes."

Charles had a brother who lived in Dakar, a large city — where one makes fortune, perhaps, but where one forgets his own. But that day, Mary must have surely given him orders, for a few days later her claimant received a box of new clothes from his brother.

The old man showed no sign of surprise in receiving them. He immediately dressed and went to thank his celestial advocate.

"I have come to thank my Mother. It is she who had these sent to me," he explained in passing the convent.

What was most to be admired? his simple faith? his ingenuous prayer? his unlimited confidence? his touching gratitude?

Charles passed many more days and nights prostrated before the Tabernacle or at the feet of his beloved Mother. The angels witnessed the mystical colloquies between the Virgin and the old man; then, one day began for Charles the colloquy without end in heaven.

Who shall relate the miseries relieved, the sufferings alleviated, the hearts consoled by the compassionate goodness of Mary?

Sr. Mary Paul, W. S.

Annie Awaty

ANNIE AWATY was left an orphan when very young. She remained with the Sisters in Karema on the banks of the beautiful, sunny, blue Tanganyika Lake. A delicate girl, she was very sensitive and her tastes were more refined than those of most children of her tribe. She had a beautiful voice and was fond of music; so that as soon as silence time was over, she could be heard singing about the house. She liked beads and spent hours stringing them into necklaces and bracelets; not so much for the sake of wearing them, as for the pleasure of looking at the pretty, bright colors cleverly set and entwined. Annie was a pious girl and everybody's friend. When there was hard work to do, she willingly did her share. Despite these qualities, Annie was not perfect; she had her faults.

One day during the time devoted to needlework, also a time of serious conversation, we were speaking of the terrible wonders that would foretell and bring the end of the world. Sitting on the terrace we could hear the lake roaring, as its waves were thrown on the rocks. I quoted our Lord's warning: "And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon earth distress of nations by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves." Even then we could hear a dreadful storm coming; consequently, we could easily imagine how much worse it would be on the last day.

"Sister, if this is the case, I'll go back to Mwazye Mission, where there is no lake," exclaimed Annie.

"Poor girl! You would be crushed under one of those huge Mwazye mountains."

"O, Sister, it is too dreadful! Suppose I go down to Kasagula Plains, where there is neither lake nor mountains."

"You may meet with a star falling from heaven that would roast the whole plain with you in the middle of it."

The entire world; that is, the part known to Annie, was unsafe. After a few moments of reflection, she remarked: "Supposing the end of the world would arrive now, I am sure God would be pleased to find me here sewing."

I approved, telling the girls about St. Aloysius Gonzaga who was always ready to die even while at recreation.

A few weeks after this incident, I was changed to another mission. Hardly had I



reached my destination when I heard our Lord had come for Annie. He found her, as she had wished, at her duty. One of the Sisters at Karema sent me the following details of her last days:

Thursday, Annie was in class as usual. In the afternoon, she went to Church with the other girls for their weekly instruction; then she went to confession. About six o'clock she began to feel sick. Despite all we did, on Friday her temperature remained above 104. Annie did not realize she was dangerously ill. She talked and laughed and took whatever we gave her. Towards evening, though danger of death was not immediate, the priest was called. When he arrived, Annie candidly said: "Father, I went to confession yesterday; I have nothing left to say." The Missionary proposed to anoint her. Though somewhat surprised to be thought so ill, she willingly consented. Saturday morning Annie's temperature was just as high. She was only just very weary as she herself expressed it.

"Sister, when I am gone," she whispered, "will you please share my pretty beads, necklaces and all I possess among my friends?"

"Wait, Annie, you may still wear them. Our Blessed Mother will perhaps cure you."

"No, I am going to die."

(Please turn to page 12)

ONE TIME SLAVES

ONE DAY a peal of the church bell announced that another little soul had been cleansed by the waters of Baptism. A little later, the newly baptized baby, Stefano, was brought to be admired by the WAMAMA (Sisters), and to receive a medal of Our Lady. Stefano, the loveliest little colored baby, paid no attention to all the nice things being said about him. He just slept peacefully in his grandmother's arms. Rosa was proud of her little grandson and told everybody that it was thanks to WAMAMA that she is a Catholic, the mother of a large family and now a grandmother.

Then came the story of her childhood:

In 1907, when the first White Sisters came to Tabora, this was the center of the slave-trade. Slaves were brought from all parts of the country tied together by a heavy rope round their necks, to be sold in the slave market.

Many of these slaves were ransomed by the White Fathers and the women and children were cared for by the White Sisters.

One woman, Dalazuka was her name, had been brought all the way from Urundi with her three children: two girls and a boy. The way was long and they had to walk for days and days, often goaded on by the whip. Some, overcome by their weakness, were left by the roadside to die. This was what happened to Dalazuka's little boy. She arrived at Tabora carrying her youngest child, Vavondi, on her back while the other, Mtani, clung fearfully to her mother's hand.

Can you imagine this woman's joy when she was told she had been bought by the Missionaries and that she would live at the Sisters' and that they would take care of her and her children?

At the Mission she met other ransomed slaves. How privileged they knew they were to be able to live here in peace while so many of their former companions had to work for



Our Lady of Slaves

hard-hearted masters who spared neither harshness nor the whip.

Dalazuka often realized how lucky she had been, especially when run-away slaves would seek refuge at the Mission, and then their horrid masters would come along to reclaim them armed with that dreaded whip. In those days it was a common sight: Mother Superior with the angry master on one side of her and the poor crouching slave on the other. How she would have liked to free them all . . . but the price demanded was far beyond the Mission means; and with a sorrowful heart, she had to see the poor creatures dragged back to their piteous life.

Our Lady of Slaves watched over her ransomed children and after several years' instruction Dalazuka and her children were baptized. Vavondi, the younger of the two, was then about seven. She was named Rosa.

The following day a Sister absent-mindedly called: "Vavondi, come here," but she did not move. Sister called again. The child took no notice. "Why don't you answer me?" asked Sister. "You called me Vavondi and Vavondi is no more; she died yesterday. I am Rosa."

And Grandma Rosa laughed heartily as she related this episode of her childhood.

Mtani, now Odilia, never married. She loves helping at the Mission. Everyone calls her "Mama Odilia." At present she is proving a great help at Kahama Mission, about 75 miles from Tabora. She finds the days too short for all to be done.

Mother Joan Fisher.

During an instruction for their First Communion, the Missionary, wishing to inspire his young audience with the fear of hell, repeated several times that when one goes there it is for eternity. Then he asked: "Did you understand?"

"Yes, Father, you said 'forever' six times," replied a little Negro.

Echoes from Africa



When visiting the sick at Mandiakuy, the Sisters were told that a panther that had ravaged the village was finally caught by the Catholic boys; that they only dared to chase it and eat of its meat, because the pagans of this region believe that the panther brings death.

On hearing that the boys had followed the panther for several hours, the Sisters inquired if they had come home singing triumphantly as the pagans are wont to do.

"Oh, no," was the quick response, "they recited the rosary in thanksgiving on the way home."

What faith for those who yesterday were still pagans!

Sister was relating the story of Lot's wife who, forgetting the angel's command, looked back and for her curiosity, was turned into a pillar of salt. The children were quite impressed and one little one asked: "Sister, is that the salt we eat?"

Sister read the Gospel of Ash Wednesday to her pupils and she explained the necessity of penance during lent, to expiate not only our own sins, but those of sinners who refuse to repent. She asked each child to try to obtain with her little sacrifices the grace for a sinner to make his Easter duty.

During recess, the children were skipping rope and Gabriella said she would skip one hundred times. When she had counted up to ninety-eight, she stopped short, and, completely out of breath, with a deep sigh, said: "Sister, that was for my sinner." Even in play, she had not forgotten her promise.

The following letter was received at Ndala Training School from the father of one of the students, a teacher in one of the mission schools. Reverend Sister:

I want to tell you how your student, Helena Kabula, left this earth on Saturday morning at nine o'clock.

In spite of our great sorrow at her death, my wife and I wish to thank you for the education

and Christian training you gave our daughter. She showed us that training by the way she died; so calmly and joyfully, whilst encouraging us to pray. And now we wish to ask you not to forget her in your prayers. We also ask all her fellow companions of Ndala to beg God, Our Father, to take her quickly to His Eternal Home and give her her reward.

Therefore, Sister, we shall all pray together.
Fransisko Kalamida

This young girl stayed with the Sisters for some time. She was to graduate from Ndala Training School, but God gave her her R. I. P. instead. Helena was a model of patience and endurance.

The dispensary at Carthage was crowded and the people were chatting while waiting their turn. The Sisters overheard the following conversation:

"You see these women, well, for the love of God they do not marry so that they may come here to care for us Arabs."

"Are their medicines good?"

"Are they good?" answered a man whose child the Sisters had cured of a terrible skin disease. "You may go to Tunis, or Sousse, or Sfax or Tripoli and you will find no better medicines and no better nurses. I took my daughter to Tunis and the doctor treated her for three months and she was no better. The Sisters nursed her and she is completely cured."

"EH OUA!" they exclaimed in chorus. "How good they are!"

The first speaker continued: "They treat us BLACHI; they never ask to be paid. They were rich in their country, but for love of God, they left their homes, their fathers, and mothers, their brothers and sisters to come to us; they are very good."

"Yes, and they will go to heaven!" some one exclaimed.

"Oh surely," they all agreed. "They will go to heaven with their shoes on."

DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED MARY

Sister John Cyrysostom, who accompanied Reverend Mother on her visitation to the missions in Central Africa, sent us the following notes on the natives' devotion to our Blessed Mother.

AT BOUDOINVILLE, as in many of our Mission posts, a large statue of Mary stands in the courtyard. The natives love to stop before it and pray.

One day a pagan woman, who had never before come to the Sisters, goes into ecstasy before it . . . "She beautiful Lady" . . . "She seems so good" . . . The woman's mind is now crowded with thoughts . . . and questions too.

Suddenly a Sister appears. An excellent chance to enlighten her . . . The good woman approaches somewhat timid. "Tell me, this very beautiful Lady . . . Does she live here?" . . . Is this her home?"

Good pagan that you are, with heart and mind of a child . . . truly, you are not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, familiarizing yourself so quickly with its inhabitants who, for you, immediately become beings with whom one lives . . .

Yes, you are right. Mary lives with us and each one of our houses is really hers . . .



A Good Pagan

Thus this very special devotion to Mary which the Missionaries have inculcated in their colored people, is expressed in a great number of our Missions by the erection of a little oratory quite distinct and often rather far from the mission church and in which the Mother of God is honored, particularly on her feast days . . . the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption seem to be the most popular.

Apart from this public devotion, there is a private devotion even more touching. There is not a Negro passing in the vicinity of the chapel who does not stop, sometimes making a long detour, in order to greet his Mother of Heaven. Even the pagans are strongly attracted by this "Flower of Virgins" who, to them is something concrete, the ideal beauty of the Catholic Religion.

If statistics are necessary to convince you further of the particular devotion of the Negroes for Mary . . . I was assured that at Rwaza the Blessed Virgin, to whom a private sanctuary was erected in the brushwood (one of the numerous oratories of which I spoke) receives more than 1,000 Hail Marys a day . . . Evidently mathematical accuracy cannot be guaranteed from statistics on such a subject, but it is at least an indication of the vast number of prayers which rise from the dark Continent to the gentle Mother of the

BUKEYE BLESSED VIRGIN IN AFRICA



humble and the little ones.

Prayers in great number, certainly, but also fervent prayers. At Savé I saw a very large gathering in front of the same kind of little chapel and I watched these people pray. There were young mothers who could be recognized by the pretty headband of gold colored grass which they wear like a crown of maternity. They held their little darlings so tightly and gazed so tenderly at the Mother of Love that I was deeply moved.

A few minutes later a patient coming from the dispensary had them stop his stretcher in front of Mary, "Salvation of Invalids." Others did the same. Their faith and confidence was beautiful.

What shall I tell you about the children's devotion to the Virgin Mary? It is universal. All our Sisters in the schools spoke to me about it. For them, the rosary is the favorite prayer and often they form groups at the foot of a statue to recite it.

If the children so love their Heavenly Mother, in the same proportion the little colored sisters have a very particular affection for her, which perhaps, explains their vocation. Almost all the Congregations of Native Sisters which we train for the Religious Life in our missions (there are 17 in all) are placed under the protection of the Blessed Virgin. To my knowledge there is only one at Bukeye which is under the protection of St. Theresa of the Infant Jesus. This does not mean that the little Sisters fail to invoke the Queen of All Saints . . . Quite to the contrary. In fact it was at Bukeye that we were shown a very beautiful bas-relief carved by one of the little colored Sisters and which was on view at the Vatican Exposition of Native Art. And do you think the Sister was preoccupied with this distant exhibition? . . . I think not. Rather, as she worked the clay in silence and in prayer, her expression showed that she was thinking of but one thing: glorification of the Virgin, her mother and model.

I stopped for a long time before this beautiful medallion. A slender Murundie profile with a very pure, serene expression. A beautiful incarnation of Mary in the dark country . . . And as I wondered where she found her model, the White Sister in charge of the Novitiate pointed out to me at the back of the room, where all were working in an atmosphere of contemplation and prayer, a novice bent over her sewing machine. It was indeed the same delicate profile and the same contained expression of adoration and love.

"Well, little Sister, you are the living pic-

**Reverend Mother General With
a Sister of Savé**





Little Crusaders

ture of Mary," I said to her. Her large eyes were fixed on me for a moment with an expression of calm happiness. Then it seemed to me she was blushing (as the colored know how to blush) and without a word, she quickly took up her work again. "She must be very happy," I added, a bit sheepishly, speaking to the White Sister who accompanied me.

"Oh, no," she answered quickly, "she is much too retiring and modest to rejoice over that." Not any more so, however, than the young sculptress who makes just as light of her talent, no matter how real. Both, like Mary, know how to bury themselves in the lowness of a servant and to refer all praises to God who has worked great things in them.

You see they have long studied their virginal model, these little Sisters who are reproducing her so well, much better than in clay or in plaster.

At Savé, Novitiate of the Daughters of Mary, the devotion of the Colored Sisters for the Blessed Virgin is just as ardent. With artistic people, such as the Batutsi, it expresses itself in a poetic manner. They were singing when we passed, a hymn marvelously adapted by the little Sisters themselves to a native air, in music astonishingly pure and tender . . . They referred to the Blessed Virgin as "Seagull of Heaven" (if one can translate by seagull the name of this graceful bird of snowy plumage that one meets throughout the Ruanda).

In our flourishing colored Missions it is not only individual or even particular groups that like to honor Mary. It is sometimes an entire country like Uganda, which is the particular territory of the Blessed Virgin. It is Mary's Kingdom which has been consecrated to her from the beginning.

The first mission station founded in this land of martyrs was immediately named Villa Maria, the city of Mary. This name was to be followed some time later by Mary Hill, Hill of the Virgin . . . The country belongs to her, it is her special domain: there is certainly no doubt about that.

Therefore the Apostolic Vicar of Uganda, His Excellency, Bishop Cabana, was not long in requesting the visit of Our Lady of Fatima in his Vicariate. The blessed Statue was carried in triumph on the shoulders of the Negroes and acclaimed by the whole region. There were magnificent celebrations about which everyone is still speaking. Our Lady was received in her country with all the filial fervor, that she had the right to expect from her children.

In Bangweolo and Nyasaland the "Legion of Mary" is very much in favor. At Cilubula, one of the missions in this territory about 20 girls from the Normal School are zealous members . . . During Holy Week they asked to keep silence, not for three hours, but for three days! The little ones seeing the seriousness of their older sisters, did the same. During these three days, no singing, no shouting, no conversations of any kind. All

went to church in silence, went to work in silence, ate in silence, and that of their own choice. Their shouts of joy after Mass on holy Saturday showed how they had to constrain themselves to observe such complete silence these days.

This is a souvenir of former times: of the founding of Cilubula.

I take the following lines from the history of its beginning written by Mother Seraphine:

"We were entering our new house on Oct. 31, 1902. The natives were going through it without ceremony, saying: 'The Sisters are our mothers; they have come here for us; let us pay our respects to them.' This consisted, after the customary reverent greeting, in clapping hands for the men, and making a genuflection for the women; then sitting in silence for long hours.

The beautiful picture of Our Lady of Good Counsel, patron of our house, was also a marvelous attraction for these people, entrusted to Mary from the beginning by Bishop Dupont. Every day, but especially on Sunday, these big 'children' came in thousands to gaze at the picture of the Queen of Heaven. They remained there without saying a word, their eyes fixed on the mother and child.

"Devotion to the Queen of Heaven is a delight within the reach of the mentality of

these people for their tribe profess a real devotion for the queen mother. Word spread far and wide and groups, including old men, arrived after a journey of several days to see the 'Dona Nyina wa Kiva Bwana Jesu' Our Lady Mother of God. Some Sundays the Chapel and the balcony were so filled with Negroes that Brother Optat feared the floor would cave in, everything in this country being constructed without lime, simply with clay."

At Likuni there was an accident which could have been fatal, and which caused great excitement at the girls' school. Every Saturday the girls go to the river to bathe and to wash their clothes. One of the older girls, while rinsing hers, leaned over too far and fell into deep water and was carried away by the current. Her three companions called to her to hang on to a tree, which she succeeded in doing before she became unconscious. The strongest of the girls, seeing the danger, swam out and dragged her back to shore. Hurrying to the scene we found the girl stretched out under a tree, unconscious, and breathing painfully. She suffered from a nervous shock and had to rest for several days.

The happy ending to this incident, which could have been tragic, is attributed to the protection of the Blessed Virgin, for the girl on regaining consciousness immediately asked if she still had her scapular medal. Mary could not let her trusting protege perish.

A Bush Chapel in Honor of Mary



From Our Sisters' Letters



Mother Loretta With One of the Old Folks

Mother Loretta writes from Tabora, Tanganyika Territory

The cases arrived. How can I ever thank you and our kind benefactors for the precious articles! If only the Sisters and our kind benefactors could witness the joy of the little Africans in receiving a dress or shorts, a beautiful holy picture, medal or the gift of gifts—a rosary! I feel sure you would all be well repaid for your generosity. However, I am happy to know that our dear Lord will pay our debt of gratitude for your charity.

You should have seen our little ones when they saw the doll. It is simply impossible to express in words their reaction, especially the astonishment of our little Carolina, who is three years old. I am enclosing her photo in her new dress with the famous doll. She is quite an extraordinary child for her age.

One day Sister took her to town and on the way a lady gave her a penny to buy candy. Grasping the coin, she quickly said: "It will be for little Jesus on Sunday." An heroic act for a little Negro child, who hardly ever sees candy and likes it as much as any little American boy or girl.

By the way, Carolina was ransomed by the children back home in the States, as well as many others of the little ones we have here at Tabora; all of whom seem to be outstanding little characters that give great hopes for the future. Nevertheless, some of these babies do not live. Little Hermani was a great friend of Carolina, who a short time ago was taken from us. She was very sad when she saw her playmate put into the ground. A few days later it began to rain and Carolina came in tears to tell Sister her little friend would get wet. Sister reassured her in saying Hermani was now in Heaven, playing with the angels. Several times since then Carolina asked if she, too, could not go to play with the angels.

Besides the orphanage, we have a home for the aged. It is quite an ordinary occurrence for an old man or woman to come to the door and say:

"Nimefika tu." (I have come.)

"Kufanya nini?" asks Sister. (What to do?)

"Kukaa." (To stay.)

These are invariably Moslems or pagans. When asked if their children could not care for them, they always give the same reply. They are not wanted because they can no longer work. They no longer have the strength to draw water, carry heavy loads of wood or dig the earth. Some of them walked for days through the African bush before reaching the WAMAMA (Sisters) of whom they heard so much.

Needless to say none of them are sent away, for their corner of the Mission is called "Gate of Heaven"; and our Blessed Mother sees to it that they pass through the Gate. I was told that during the past fifteen years, only one of our guests died without baptism; and that was due to a sudden death during the night.

No one is obliged to assist at the instructions which are given daily; but all do, thanks to our blind catechist, Jacobo, about whom I will tell you in my next letter.

Then too, we have a large dispensary and

Sister is kept very busy all morning; in the afternoon, she visits those who are too ill to leave their huts. All sorts of cases are taken care of at the dispensary and Sister extracts from 30 to 50 teeth daily. These with the rest of the waste matter are thrown into a pit to be burnt. After the extraction of her teeth, noticing for where they were destined, a woman remarked: "Mama, they tell us at the end of time our souls will be united to our bodies. Will we have to come back here for our teeth???"

There was a terrible drought during the last rainy season; consequently the crops were not sufficient. The cost of grain went up to five times its normal price; so that the poor people eat but three times a week. Thanks to the generosity of our benefactors, until now, we have been able to assist many and feed our children and old folks.

They understand how privileged they are and their prayers are continually ascending to the throne of God to draw down His blessings upon their good benefactors.

**Sister Mary Brendan writes from
Hoima, Uganda**

Thanks very much for the nice parcel we received last week. Holy pictures are always welcome in these parts where birthdays are unknown, and where feast days are very much in the fore. Of course all our pupils, present, past and even future, find their way to the convent to be wished a happy feast; since this means receiving a holy picture, when the Sisters have some!

The maps, too, are most useful. St. Margaret's Junior Secondary school is a war baby, which came into existence in June, 1945. Evidently, our stock of apparatus is limited. I have been trying to find a map of the world for several months, and you have been so kind as to send us four of them! I shall find some old unbleached cotton to paste on the back to strengthen them, and then we will have some nice wall maps.

The Corner Stone of our new Church was blest recently by Bishop Lacoursiere. The blessing of the stone was followed by a Pontifical High Mass, sung in four voices by the school girls and boys of the mission. The MUKAMA (King of Bunyoro) had been invited, but was unable to come because of illness. However, he sent his wife, the MUGO, to represent him, as well as some important chiefs, both Catholic and Protestants.

Here on the missions one learns all sorts of trades and professions, and today, in fact

now, I am going to begin a new profession . . . the Beggars Profession! If ever you have any medals or rosary crosses to send to the missions, please do not forget Hoima.

We are most grateful for all you sent and with our thanks assure our benefactors of our prayers and those of the children.

**Sister Noelita writes from
Navrongo, Gold Coast**

Our Church was over crowded for Easter. People came from the distant villages to celebrate the feast. Many of them had to sleep at the mission because their homes are too far away to enable them to come and return the same day. Furthermore, it is very tiresome to walk not only in the warm but the hot sun of Africa. It is not very pleasant to walk bare-footed upon the burning stones; not to mention the thirst they have to endure at times. But our Catholics make these sacrifices generously and come to Mass just the same. All assist at Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament in the afternoon.

After Mass sports took place . . . First of all, there is the bicycle race; then running, putting the weight, blind man's race, carrying the empty bucket, three legged race, etc. All is well organized. Women, men, girls and boys participate. Various objects, the gifts of our benefactors back home, are dis-



Little Carolina

Off For a Day
in the Bush



tributed to the lucky winners. You ought to see with what joy these poor people, who have hardly anything, receive their prizes! How much the dresses, books, pictures and other religious articles are appreciated by all! Needless to say our benefactors are not forgotten in the prayers of our dear Africans.

Besides the works at the missions, we go to visit the distant villages. Thanks to the mother of one of our Sisters who sent us the bicycles, we can save a great deal of time that it used to take to walk and do more good. The natives are always delighted to have the Sisters visit them. By these visits we keep in touch with our Christians and win others into the fold of Christ. Please do not forget our mission in your prayers.

A CHILD OF OUR LADY OF AFRICA
(Concluded)

This time Achour, her husband, was at home. He was most eager that we should visit his house; and pointing to the precious picture he said: "Look, here is the African Lady. I went to see her three times in her DJEMMA (temple) in Algiers."

"Would you not like to give us this picture to clean for you? We would then put it in a pretty frame."

"Willingly, you may take it."

Within a short time, we brought Fatouma's treasure back to her. It would be impossible to describe the woman's joy.

We could not help smiling and from our hearts a prayer went up to Mary asking her to take possession of these hearts for her Divine Son.

A White Sister.

ANNIE AWATY

(Concluded)

"But if you were allowed to choose?"

"I would rather go home to God. Sister, please say good-bye for me to all the Sisters I know. In heaven I will pray for the Missions, for our Bishop, the Fathers, the Sisters and for all my benefactors. Please do not forget me; do not leave me in purgatory."

All hope was gone. We fervently asked our Blessed Mother to obtain whatever was the best for the dear girl's happiness. There was no need of reminding her to pray. Ejaculations came to her lips. She renewed the promises of her Baptism. At two o'clock, she became delirious, her wandering mind mixing up prayers and arithmetic problems. At four o'clock, in her own month, on her own day, our Blessed Mother come for Annie.

By a White Sister

OBITUARY

We recommend to the prayers of our readers the souls of:

Most Rev. James Morrison, Archbishop of Antigonish, N.S.

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Maurice Spillane, Atlantic City, N. J.

Sister Mary of Good Council, W. S., Uganda.

Sister Mary St. Robert, W. S., Algiers.

Mrs. Katherine Maier, Elizabeth, N. J.

Mrs. Emma Buckellew, New Brunswick, N. J.

Mrs. Edith M. Waldron, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. John Coyne, Elizabeth, N. J.

Mr. Lee Drisco, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mrs. Anthony Ceres, Perth Amboy, N. J.

Miss Zita Graham, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Mr. A. G. Erb, Jacksonville, Fla.

Mrs. Mary Considine, Jersey City, N. J.

Oh, Those Foreigners!

AT THE DISPENSARY, Sister was getting ready to put an end to the sufferings of one of her clients. A turn, then a pull of the forceps, and the tooth was out. So quick had been the operation that the Negro was hardly conscious of the extraction. He cried and laughed at the same time.

"You promised to send your son to school. Why does he not come?" asked Sister.

"Oh," replied the man, a little embarrassed, "the MMERE (native grain) would be eaten by the birds if he did not stay to watch it."

"All right!" continued Sister, "open your mouth."

So saying, she reversed the forceps so as to present the handle which had the shape of a hammer. The old pagan stood nonplussed while the Sister held the tooth between the thumb and index of the left hand and the hammer in the right.

"Since you do not keep your word, I am going

to put back your decayed tooth. Open your mouth, I said."

The scene became tragicomical. The poor fellow rolled himself on the ground, groaned, and promised everything.

"Tomorrow, without fail . . . I assure you . . . I swear to it . . . I will send my son . . . every day . . . do you hear . . . every day he will come . . . Do you want my wife, too? In the morning? In the afternoon? Just as you like."

"Well, send your son to begin with. We shall see about your wife later. But remember, if you do not keep your word this time you shall regret it."

Relieved, but not altogether over his emotion, the Negro got up slowly, picked up his stick and left grumbling: "Those Whites. Who gave them so much intelligence? With the same instrument they are capable of pulling out a tooth and putting it back again. Oh, those Foreigners!"



How would our school children like to have their backs used by companions as a blackboard? For the want of necessary school equipment, this happens in the African bush.

If at the end of school, any children should have good copy books, pencils, especially colored ones or paints that they will no longer make use of, they would be most gratefully received by the little Africans, either in the desert or the bush.



Dominico and his companions wish to thank all those who kindly renewed their subscription and those who subscribed for a friend.

However, he is wondering why some of the readers did not as yet make use of the renewal blank. If he and his friends had not kept their promise to be good, so that our Blessed Mother would answer their prayers that all the Americans would receive the MESSENGER OF OUR LADY OF AFRICA, he would understand. But they made so many efforts to be very, very good!

Well, he is thinking perhaps the Americans preferred to wait for our Blessed Mother's month to give her this present.

Will Dominico be disappointed again? It is up to our subscribers to answer the question.

